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ABSTRACT

Changes made by 41 institutions of higher education to improve the quality of teacher education are briefly reported in this news release, as examples of responses to the need to improve educational quality. In general, institutions are raising standards, changing their programs, offering faculty and staff development activities, developing programs with faculty from other academic disciplines on campus, extending the clinical component, infusing research findings into the program, and investigating how to attract better students. (RH)

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American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

TEACHER EDUCATION QUALITY INITIATIVES WIDESPREAD

The commitment to quality education by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) resulted this year in the production of a series of landmark publications on excellence in teacher preparation and the redesign of the national system of accreditation of teacher education. Educating A Profession outlined the elements of excellence in teacher education with three component publications: Profile of a Beginning Teacher, Competency Assessment, and Extended Programs for Teacher Education. The Association's plan for redesign of the system of teacher preparation program accreditation was approved by the National Council on Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), which is working now to implement it.

The Association also worked to ensure that standards for professional teaching preparation be soundly based in effective teaching research and not be eroded by such "quick fixes" as emergency teaching certificates.

This national effort was paralleled by initiatives taken across the country by AACTE member institutions, which took the lead in educational reform.

As reported by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), almost all (94 percent) of the nation's schools of education implemented one or more measures to improve the quality of teacher candidates during the past five years. Surveyed schools of education reported raising entry requirements and making the curriculum more rigorous. An AACTE survey this year revealed that institutions are raising standards, changing their programs, offering faculty and staff development activities, developing programs with faculty from other academic disciplines on campus, extending the clinical component, infusing research findings into the program, and investigating how to attract better students.

The following examples present a smattering of these and other responses to the need to improve educational quality:

Appalachian State University, Boone, N.C.: Has established four major faculty task forces to improve recruitment and retention procedures, upgrade standards, pursue new program opportunities, and build a new curriculum and organizational structure. A "Think Tank" has been appointed to develop a college "Center of Excellence." Chancellor John Thomas has given a one-quarter-million-dollar endowment for academic scholarships to be given to high-achieving education undergraduate majors.

Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio: Approved new admission, selection and retention procedures that will strengthen present policies. Placed greater effort in recruiting high quality students through three new "select student" programs. Developed a new computer literacy program for teacher education students. Will conduct a retreat specifically to look at the reform literature and the school's response to it.

Central Missouri State University, Warrensburg: Convened a blue-ribbon steering committee of college faculty to improve teacher preparation, involve faculty in the schools, increase emphasis on applied research, and involve field practitioners in planning and instruction.

Central State University, Edmond, Okla.: Raised admission standards, initiated staff development programs, and will fully implement a new professional sequence in the fall of 1984. The state's Professional Standards Board has revised all certificate programs.

Central Washington University, Ellensburg, Wash.: Raised admission requirements, including the scores on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills, major and minor grade point averages, and the cumulative grade point average. Will host a symposium on ways to improve teacher preparation to guarantee that graduates from schools of education meet or surpass public expectations.

Coppin State College, Baltimore, Md.: Held faculty workshops with NTE consultants to examine course content and curriculum based on student performance. Produced report, "Enhancing Urban Education Through Education," with Bank Street College of Education. Expanded education program offerings to include a master's in arts and teaching, and a leadership training internship for practicing administrators. Developed training centers in schools. Established scholarships for MAT students. Revising curriculum. Hiring adjunct faculty from Baltimore City Schools. All programs involve faculty in arts and sciences as well as education.

East Carolina University, Greenville, N.C.: Raised admission requirements to teacher education program to require at least 644 on NTE Core Battery I and II, 2.2 grade point average, passage of speech and hearing tests, and personal interviews. Acceptable scores on the NTE Core Battery III and Area Exam are required for certification.

Eastern New Mexico University, Portales: Convened education faculty, representatives of the state department of education, faculty from other university disciplines, and education students to discuss education program components, requirements, and expectations. Examined the education program to ensure that the new state requirement that new teachers pass the NTE was adequately reflected in the program. Instituted major revision of the teacher preparation curriculum to ensure that effective schools and teaching research is included.

East Tennessee University, Johnson City: Will increase admission standards one point each year until 1985. Requires exit competency test in math and reading for all teachers, involves sophomores and juniors in school system, and helped establish a $20,000 grant to the community schools from business and industry.

East Texas State University, Commerce: Will cosponsor an Urban Education Conference with the Dallas Independent School District on "Teacher Education and Student Achievement: Is The Nation At Risk?" Keynote speakers will include prominent national leaders from both public schools and higher education.

George Peabody College for Teachers, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn.: Is conducting the School Incentives Project, funded by the Lyndhurst Foundation and the state of Tennessee, to discover through a 100-school pilot project whether economic incentives will motivate teachers and principals to seek substantial improvements in the academic achievement of students. Peabody faculty are working to develop research-based criteria and processes for evaluating, rewarding, and improving teacher performance, for the state of Tennessee. Has established a Learning Technology Center to train educators in technology and help school districts in educational technology research and implementation. Institute for School Improvement provides technical assistance to schools. Is offering advanced leadership programs for principals and school superintendents.

George Washington University, Washington, D.C.: Launched program to attract top students who meet entrance standards of at least 1000 on the SAT and placement in the top third of senior class.

Georgia Southern College, Statesboro: Initiated program of continuous assessment of teacher education students, including more rigorous screening of candidates for entry into the program, prior to student teaching, and upon graduation. Is providing greater follow-up support for recent graduates and is giving more faculty evaluation and feedback. Initiated joint planning with arts and letters faculty to determine curriculum changes needed to fit teachers' requirements in content background. Initiated curriculum changes and is exploring a new master's program for mid-career entrants into teacher education to facilitate their entry into the profession.

Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, Mass.: Returned after 11-year hiatus to teacher training with Midcareer Math and Science Program to address shortage of qualified teachers in mathematics, physics, and chemistry. The program enables professionals from high technology, scientific research, and financial services to receive professional training in teaching, leading to, secondary level certification.

Jackson State University, Jackson, Miss.: Identifies education majors during initial entry to the university. Revised general education and professional education curricula and incorporated a variety of practicum activities. Developed an Outreach Program to three neighboring counties, using a cadre of university professors in an intensive academic program in math, English, reading, biological science, and chemistry.

Long Island University, Greenvale, N.Y.: Is sponsoring a conference with the Nassau-Suffolk School Boards on six major national reports and how to implement practices relevant to the school districts' needs.

Loyola University, New Orleans, La.: Is convening a task force on A Nation At Risk comprised of representatives from the Department of Education, the university, and the New Orleans educational community.

Loyola University of Chicago, Ill.: Met with faculty of departments of mathematics, chemistry, physics, biology, and natural science on how to improve the mathematics and science preparation of teachers. Is helping develop seminars for master teachers in these areas.

Memphis State University, Memphis, Tenn.: Is working with the Tennessee General Assembly to formulate criteria on the Better Schools Master Teacher/Master Administrator Program and has held three conferences on the program and its implications for teacher education. Submitted two experimental programs on teacher training to the General Assembly, recommending heavier arts and sciences training, full-year, full-time internships supervised by master teachers, and delayed scholarships until graduates qualify for a rung on the career ladder with competitive salaries. Is working with governor to recruit 25 business and industrial firms to offer part-time employment to students training to become math or science teachers.

Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, Ariz.: Initiated basic skills admission exam for all applicants to teacher training program. Established microcomputer laboratory for preservice and inservice training.

Oakland University, Rochester, Mich.: Works with university's Presidential Task Force on the Improvement of Public Education to develop collaborative approaches between the university community and the public schools. Participates on the university's Presidential Commission on Excellence to address quality and excellence in the university. Participates in the Collaboration for Excellence group, consisting of representatives from Oakland University, Oakland Community College, and the Oakland Intermediate School District on enhancing education quality from kindergarden to graduate school.

Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Va.: Developed specific admission, continuance, and exit criteria for all teacher preparation students that exceed those required by the university. Developed specific levels of competence required in each course of the School of Education.

Purdue University, West Lafayette, Ind.: Established the Purdue School Mathematics and Science Center to conduct research to build exemplary programs in math and science, develop effective instructional materials and approaches, and disseminate the products nationally.

Radford University, Radford, Va.: Developed new partnerships with inservice colleagues, the organized profession, and business and industry toward unity in preparing teachers. Implemented major curriculum changes and changes in inservice education. Raised standards for admission to include a grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale. Developed competency/performance-based curriculum. Implemented a four-year, field-oriented program. Developed exit criteria. Established partnerships with public schools through teacher-professor exchanges, cooperatively developed inservice programs, uses teams in supervising student teaching, and team teaching with university and school personnel. Established partnership with a high school to develop new curriculum, programs, inservice training, positive learning climate, and model programs for use elsewhere.

Southeast Missouri State University, Springfield: Hosted a one-day conference, "Excellence in Education--A Shared Responsibility," with the Southeast Missouri Association of School Administrators. More than 400 legislators, board members, parents, teachers, administrators, and faculty attended.

University of Alabama at Birmingham: Is working with five Alabama schools of education, the Alabama State Department of Education, and the Council of Chief State School Officers to bring together various representatives of the education community and the public to implement the Alabama Plan for Excellence in the Schools.

University of Florida, Gainesville: Has developed "Proteach," an extended teacher education program that will increase academic subject matter, incorporate effective teaching research, expand education foundational studies, expand school-based experience, and will exceed Florida requirements for teacher education programs. Has raised entrance requirements for S.A.T. scores and grade point averages.

University of Massachusetts, Amherst: Has implemented a new teacher education program and developed collaborations with private industry, public school systems, and the university. Initiated the Math/Science/Technology Education Project--a master's-level teacher education program.

University of Missouri-Columbia: Raised entrance requirements to include a minimum of 2.5 grade point average on all coursework, screening on personal characteristics, and admission at program level rather than to teacher education generally. Held summer session for prospective mathematics and science teachers. Developed microcomputer curriculum for educational personnel. Established and equipped a microcomputer laboratory for preservice and inservice instruction. Is cooperating with arts and science faculties to improve undergraduate and graduate teacher education programs.

University of Missouri-St. Louis: Held faculty retreats on A Nation At Risk and is working with other university departments to review teacher preparation curricula, cooperation and improvement. Met with counterpart colleagues from other campuses and representatives from State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to identify combined responses from campuses' education and arts and sciences faculties. Is offering mathematics, science, and technology summer institutes and academic academies for high school teachers and students. Is focusing on scholarships, increased joint efforts between university and Department of Education, and ways to help 45 to 60-year-olds with strong mathematics, science, and technology backgrounds train for teaching.

University of Oregon, Eugene: Reviewing teacher education programs with representatives from university, public schools, and state policy boards to develop a post-baccalaureate internship. Is developing Center for Advanced Technology in Education and is hosting a consortium of public schools, community colleges, educational service districts, and the State Superintendent of Schools to develop the Center's agenda on instruction, research, development, and service. Is developing a statewide network for program and staff development assistance to public schools.

University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras: Has contacted state Department of Education personnel, other universities, and local professional organizations to promote education reform and ideas outlined in national reports. Has initiated faculty development on reform literature, and faculty have written analyses of A Nation At Risk. Created Dean's Commission for Leadership and Quality in Education to form plans to improve teacher education programs and leadership efforts.

University of Toledo, Ohio: Uses a competency-based teacher education program. Works with schools to acquaint them with their new teachers' training programs. Stresses academic proficiency; academic majors in secondary education carry more hours in academic field than do liberal arts majors..

University of Kentucky, Lexington: Led the state in implementing a selective admissions system for teacher education. Screens applicants on reading, writing, mathematics, and personal characteristics. Is planning an inservice day to involve several departments of the university with the schools and the college of education to improve curricula and instruction in both institutions. Works with the Fayette County School System on projects concerning mastery learning, microcomputers, tracking of student performance and career outlook, a modified "great books" program in several elementary schools, and several research studies. Is developing an honors program in education.

University of Maine, Orono: Redesigned teacher education to emphasize liberal arts, interdisciplinary work, human development, collaborative efforts with the teaching profession, on-site experiences, recruitment, and continuous evaluation of teacher education students. Is launching a pilot program of professional preparation teams in two school districts to train freshman teacher education students.

University of Mississippi, University: Raised entry requirements to pass the College Outcomes Measures Program. Is working with the Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Development to recast teacher certification, including a minimum provisional year for new teachers with test and review of teacher performance prior to award of standard certificate. The commission will also examine beginning teacher support groups, master teachers, certificate renewal requirements, inservice programs, and professional development. Provides free tuition for teachers taking science, math, computer science, and foreign language courses as they add on new areas of certification endorsement.

University of South Carolina, Columbia: Revised program to require prospective teachers to earn a B.A. in humanities, social sciences, or science and mathematics with a major in the subject field to be taught in the public schools. The professional component is gained in an extended program that reflects research on effective teaching and includes 60 percent of coursework in public school classrooms. Is training all faculty on effective teaching research.

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire: Instituted a 1983-84 Forum Series focusing on community support of education. Is participating in a May symposium of panelists and participants representing public education, business, advocacy organizations, and the university responding to the forum series.

Wayne State University, Detroit, Mich.: The dean of education chairs the Wayne State University President's Commission on Excellence for Southeast Michigan, which will produce the report, "Implications of the Recommendations of the Gardner report for Southeast Michigan," in January. The commission involved all area universities and more than 100 school districts.

Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, N.C.: Established more stringent admission criteria, reconceptualized teacher education curricula, and is working with the public school and state department personnel on an experimental principal preparation program. Is working closely with elementary and secondary schools on preservice and inservice education. Is preparing a major grant proposal and seeking funds to design and implement a more effective parent/teacher partnership for more effective schooling.

Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo: Conducted Education Forum Series throughout the year. Dean has appointed a Strategic Planning Committee to analyze forum documents and national reports.